Consumer Shopping Behaviour And The Role Of Women In Shopping – A Literature Review

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Abstract

Any person, who buys a product/service, may not be necessarily user or consumer. The subject of shopper behaviour has focused on individuals and the factors that impact their decisions to spend their resources on consumption-related items. The concepts and theories of shopper behaviour have drawn upon diverse disciplines as psychology, sociology, social psychology, cultural anthropology, and economics. Consumers who enjoy shopping are mostly female and are considered to be a noteworthy force in the retail market. Women think differently from men because there are biological, neurological, and behavioural variations between the brains of men and women. These differences in turn make an impact on their shopping behaviour. While men will load themselves with sufficient information of a product or service through internet, advertising, reviews; women would try to get benefit from others’ experience by asking people around them. This article presents a review of literature, in the field of consumer shopping behaviour and the role of women in shopping. The main purpose of this article is to identify the different streams of thought that could help the future researchers and guide them. The researcher has gone through materials that had been investigated on consumer shopping behaviour and the role of women in shopping. The study of consumer behaviour is rapidly evolving as researchers recognize and implement new techniques and trans-disciplinary perspectives to understand the nature of purchase and consumption behaviour. This in-depth outlook attempts to study consumer shopping behaviour in the illumination of rapidly developing lifestyles, standards, priorities, and communal contexts. The overall goal of such research endeavour is to achieve better understanding of consumer shopping behaviour and the role of women in shopping.

Keywords: Consumer shopping behaviour, women role in shopping, literature, retail

Introduction

“A consumer is a person who uses a product or service, and is habitually called an end user since he is the last stop and does not generally shift or sell the item to a different person. A buyer can be a consumer, as in the example of a teenager buying and using a video game. On the other hand, a consumer is not necessary to be the buyer - for instance, if a mother buys cereal for herself and her family, each family member is a consumer of the product”. Any person, who buys a product/service, may not be necessarily user or consumer. The subject of shopper behaviour has focused on individuals and the factors that impact their decisions to spend their resources on consumption-related items. The concepts and theories of shopper behaviour have drawn upon diverse disciplines as psychology, sociology, social psychology, cultural anthropology, and economics. According to Kotler, Keller, Koshay and Jha (2012) Consumer Shopping Behaviour is the study of how individuals, groups and organizations select, buy, use and dispose of goods, service, idea, or experiences to satisfy their needs and wants. Consumer buying behaviour is the sum total of a consumer's attitudes, preferences, intentions, and decisions regarding the consumer's behaviour in the marketplace when purchasing a product or service. Consumer shopping behaviour is a practice by which individuals seek out, pick, pay for, consume/utilise and dispose of goods and services to satisfy their needs and wants. Economists viewed shopping as an activity that makes consumers to make the most of their utility function (Michelle, Corrine and Jane, 1995). Shopper behaviour is that subset of human behaviour that is concerned with the decisions and acts of individuals in purchasing and using products of a
manufacturer or purchasing from particular retailers. It is profoundly rooted in psychology with dashes of sociology thrown in just to make things more interesting.

Retail is the dominion of women and shopping is an action frequently seen as complementary to female role. Women go on shopping to purchase both essential and discretionary goods, to relax, and to socialize. They are considered to be the most potential consumers in the world as they manage almost 80 percent of the domestic expenditure. Kelly (1991) noted that “the traditional woman’s role (as wife, mother, and lady) has undergone change owing to the revolution in shopping heralded by the development of the department store”. Laermans (1993) stated that “Women were redefined as professional shoppers or consumers and their performance of their traditional roles was thoroughly ‘commodified’ or redefined in terms of commodities.” Bellenger and Korgaonkar (1980) found that consumers who seek pleasure in shopping are mostly female and are a noteworthy force in the retail market. Women think differently from men because there are biological, neurological, and behavioural variations between the brains of men and women. These differences in turn make an impact on their buying behaviour. While men will pack themselves with sufficient information of a product or service through internet, advertising, reviews; women would aim to get benefit from others’ experience by asking people around them. Women are more in touch with their feelings and have the tendency to stay better connected with their family, friends, and ‘brands’. Women set their decisions and priorities not only according to their needs but also according to people in her personal circle. Hence, it becomes important to position a product, brand or a store in a way that how they will benefit her and other in her life.

1. OBJECTIVE

This article presents a review of literature, in the field of consumer shopping behaviour and the role of women in shopping. The first segment describes the significance of the various factors including lifestyle and its impact on the consumer shopping behaviour. The second segment describes the various aspects and roles of the women consumers in shopping. The main purpose of this article is to recognize the different streams of deliberation that could help the future researchers and guide them.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1. CONSUMER SHOPPING BEHAVIOUR

Shopping is the act of identifying the store and purchasing the product. The behaviour of shoppers differs according to the place where they are shopping and their involvement level with the act of shopping (Berman et al 2005). Consumer shopping behaviour tends to establish what it precisely drives consumers when making purchasing decisions. Many studies have been conducted including the above stated with regard to consumer behaviourism. The theories that help to know the consumers’ buying decision are radical, teleological, and picoeconomics behaviourism (Foxall, 2007). Even though, all these three theories acquire their own the consumers’ choice, they still play a complementary task with consumer behaviour.

A customer who has the intention to buy one particular electronic products/brand, might be tempted once entering the store to purchase either Dixon manufactured product or alternative that are on sales instead of the more expensive, also known as preference reversal. This is a typical situation where the consumer prefers a poorer pay-off (which might be temporarily) because it is available sooner, than a better long-term pay-off, which would be better for the consumer. Consumers apply this behaviour occasionally in the case of brand choice, but much more often at inter-product choices (Foxall, 2007).

Stone (1954) identified that social characteristics affect shopping typologies. He studied the various social characteristics within a social structure was one of the earliest key papers that led to the topic of shopping behaviour being explored in greater profundity. Stone’s study of Chicago
housewives showed the social context which was set in an urban shopping environment. His findings showed four different types of shoppers: economic, prescriptive ethical and apathetic. Although the sample size and variance were limited, the identification of different types of shoppers with different characteristics was an important early step into the study of shopping behaviour.

The Chicago Tribune (1955) then conducted out a similar study on female supermarket shoppers using in depth interviews. The types of shoppers identified as dependant, compulsive and individualistic.

Juster T (1966) concluded that surveys of consumer intentions to buy are inefficient predictors of purchase rates because they do not provide accurate estimates of mean purchase probability and consequently the intentions surveys cannot detect movements in mean probability among non intenders, who account for the bulk of actual purchases and for most of the time-series variance in purchase rates. They revealed the probability variable predicts more accurately than the intentions variable largely because it divides non intenders, and those who report that they "don't know" about their buying intentions, into subgroups with systematically different purchase rates.

Lawrence R (1966) observed that in a multi-brand market almost every customer has his own individual pattern of brand purchases through time. Theoretical constructs are needed as a basis for aggregating the data and reducing it to manageable proportions. They concluded that consumer behaviour has been treated as a dichotomy, "bought brand A" and "bought some other brand than A", in many models of decision processes but there is a risk that significant differences in behaviour can be obscured. It has been argued that paired product comparisons are misleading and should be abandoned. In the wider field of consumer purchasing it is also desirable to allow for the multiple-choice situation of the marketplace and to devise analytical methods which are capable of handling it in its full comple-

Darden and Reynolds (1971) found that consumer shopping orientations in relation to product usage, and found that shopping orientations economic, moralistic, personalising and apathetic.

Tauber (1972) focussed on the style of negotiation-to obtain price concessions from the seller, optimisation of merchandise choice in terms of similar shopper’s needs and desires, affiliation with reference groups, exercise of power and authority in market place exchanges, and sensory stimulation from the marketplace itself.

Kotler (1973) revealed that the tangible product is only part of the total product. Other factors such as service, advertising and pleasantries all help to form the atmosphere of place that a product is situated in, which in turn has an effect on a shoppers purchase probability.

According to Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) shopping process will bring different experiences to customers; meanwhile, the values of products or services are different due to Positions customers locate in during Processes of shopping experience.

Holman and Wilson (1982) found that shopper time constraints are potentially influenced by several personal and household characteristics such as employment status, income, education, and the number and ages of children living in the consumer’s household.

Westbrook, Robert, and Black (1985) attempted to isolate the various motivational dimensions underlying consumer shopping activity. Besides they also identified the seven dimensions of shopping behaviour.

Dodds, Monroe, Grewal (1991) stated that the purchase intention refers to the attempt of purchasing a product or service.
Lunt and Living-stone (1992) found that there are many reasons to go shopping and social reasons are particularly important: shopping is a spectacle in which one is both performer and spectator, it is seeing and being seen, meeting and being met, a way of interacting with others.

Donovan, Rossiter, Marcooly, and Nesdale (1994) proposed the theory that by inducing the shoppers to stay for a longer duration, a retail outlet may lead the shoppers to increased spending.

Uncles and Hammond (1995) have studied the various aspects of how shoppers patronising grocery stores are regular and predictable, so much so that the pattern of buying at a particular store can be interpreted against known patterns at other stores. For the grocery store manager this means using scanner records to assess patronage against a number of benchmarks or norms.

Omar (1996) has compared the shopping habits for national and own-label brands to establish if there are differences in personal characteristics and purchase behaviour between those who buy national brands and those who buy own-labels in the UK. Two distinctive markets were found to exist. These grocery shoppers differ in terms of socio-economic status, personal characteristics and shopping behaviour.

Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman (1996) identified five dimensions in the construct of behavioural intention: (i) intention to remain loyal; (ii) propensity to switch; (iii) disposition to pay more; (iv) external response to problem; and (v) internal response to problem.

Tai and Faung (1997) viewed that environment-induced emotional states have a positive association with in-store behaviour of the shoppers, which in turn, effect on Pleasure felt in the store and the in-store rating of the environmental stimuli.

According to Van Rompaey (1998) about 20% of the Belgian citizens consider grocery shopping as a tough chore and 40% want to reduce the time they spend on it.

Donthu and Garcia (1999) considered that more variation in retail outlets, more opportunities for e-shopping and increasing technological improvements on the other may impact current shopping behaviour.

Underhill (1999) in his study found that a high level of brand awareness need not always translate into sales. Shoppers do take into consideration the information they acquire in stores, rather than just relying on out of store communication.

The exploratory study of Sinha and Uniyal, (2000), conducted in India, indicated the point that the shoppers, who were new to the store or were, considering buying a brand for the first time, showed a higher level of information search. Those who were frequent buyers of the store shall either go straight to the stack and pick up product or ask the retailers when trying a new brand. In some cases they will pick up the product. In many cases they will buy the products recommended by the retailers. In any case, they will not do a very elaborate information search. Such behaviour is explained as the routine, limited or complex buying behaviour in marketing literature.

Renault D.(2000); explained that consumer behaviour by way of emotions and feelings would appear to be particularly appropriate in the artistic domain. They discussed that research on cultural behaviour should be oriented towards the sensory, imaginative and emotional aspects of the personal experience.

Hibbert and Tagg (2001) found the consumers differ in their attitude towards grocery stores and act according to their shopping motives.
According to Cele and McGrath (2001) focused that the format and ambience of the store has its own impact on the shoppers. Its effect is seen in dressing patterns, language, and interaction with store personnel as well as response to communication at the store. It is likely that even a shopping apathetic would behave in the same manner as a shopper who has a liking for shopping in a given store environment. It is obvious that even a stereotype’s behaviour changed when the store context changed.

Ness et al (2002) have conducted an empirical study on student food shopping behaviour. It is concerned especially with establishing the dimensions underlying the importance that students attach to supermarket store attributes, exploring the existence of student segments and subsequently, to profile the segments in terms of shopping behaviour and attitudes to store features. The empirical results indicate that there are five dimensions that underlie the importance of store features. These are defined respectively as economy, finance, products, personnel and access. Subsequently, two clusters are identified, indicating that the clusters are distinguished by their financial situation.

Paulins and Geistfeld (2003) found that age and marital status affects the store choice and time spent on the shopping activity. McGoldrick and Andre (1997) advocated that the socio-economic, demographic and other characteristics allow us to discriminate those buyers who are more or less loyal to the store.

Malky and Nargundkar (2003) identified that convenience and merchandise assortment were the most important factors influencing the grocery store choice behaviour.

Thang and Tan (2003) established the fact that merchandising, accessibility, reputation, in-store service and atmosphere influence customer preference for a store.

According to the Hispanic Trends.com, the Hispanic households spent a greater portion of their income in 2004 on groceries, footwear, men’s and children’s apparel, gasoline and motor oil, and house- hold textiles than other goods.

Kohli R., Devaraj S. and Mahmood M. (2004) presented a set of constructs and a method for understanding and supporting consumers' decision-making process. Taken together, constructs for the online consumers' decision-making steps (i.e. intelligence, design, and choice), performance variables (cost savings, time savings), and overall channel satisfaction provide the conceptual basis for their model that they subsequently validate using data from online consumers. Results indicated that support for the decision-making process was mediated by the cost savings and time savings gained by the online consumers and led to their greater channel satisfaction.

Eroglu, Machleit and Barr (2005) found that task-oriented shoppers perceived more crowding than non task-oriented shoppers indicating consumer motives can influence crowding perceptions.

Shepherd R., Magnusson M. and Sjödén P. (2005) conducted a number of studies of the influences on consumer purchasing and consumption of organic foods. Health benefits were demonstrated to be more strongly related to attitudes and behaviour toward organic foods than were perceived environmental benefits. It was concluded that behavior-behaviour correlations seem to be stronger than "belief"-behaviour correlations in the context of environmental concerns.

Goldsmith, Kim, Flynn, and Kim (2005) studied the variety seeking buying tendencies of consumers. In their study they found that consumers buying tendencies such as compulsive behaviour, variety-seeking tendency, impulsive buying tendency and price sensitivity are possible significant factors of shopping behaviour. This study was continued further on price sensitivity.

Roy (2005) studied the factors governing the consumers’ choice of supermarkets and identified the point that add-on benefits, general services, convenience and variety, influenced store choice.
Vitell S., Paolillo J and Singh J.(2006); investigated the roles that religiosity and one's money ethic play in determining consumer attitudes/ beliefs in various situations regarding questionable consumer practices. The results indicated that both intrinsic religiousness and one's money ethic were significant determinants of most types of consumer ethical beliefs

A study by Overby and Lee (2006) stated that the value judgment indicates the consumer preference and this consumer preference increases the behavioural intention to participate in various shopping processes.

Blackwell, Miniard and Engel (2007) considered shopping as a distinctive and critical stage in the ‘consumer decision-making process’ varies in exhibited behaviour from individual to individual.

Varshney (2006) found that small town Indian shoppers shop out for pleasure seeking variety.

Celik (2007) developed a consumer store choice scale with the attributes relating to location, price quality of products, sales personnel attitude and physical attractiveness being the basis for development of the scale.

Broderick A, Greenley G. and Mueller R. (2007) presents a generic strategic framework of alternative international marketing strategies and market segmentation based on intra- and intercultural behavioural homogeneity. They proposed Consumer involvement( CI) as a pivotal construct to capture behavioural homogeneity, for the identification of market segments. They found evidence for the cultural invariance of the measurement of CI, allowing a true comparison of inter and intra-cultural behavioural homogeneity and how CI influences purchase behaviour, and its evaluation provides information for responsive market segmentation.

Prasad and Reddy (2007) proposed that demographic characteristics such as age, income, education and location of residence affect the shopping behaviour.

Tlapana (2009) viewed that factors such as location, service levels, pricing policies, merchandise assortment, store environment and store image affect the store patronage decision of a consumer. In her study she also stated that elements contributing to the atmosphere could be either tangible or intangible. Tangible elements may include colouring, lighting, background music, goods display, point-of-sale-posters, employees and visitors. Exterior cues include location, exterior lighting, and exterior colouring. Intangibles may include scent, odours, and temperature, and other social factors such as gestures, attitudes, and behaviour of service employees and the visitors as well as personal buying readiness and past experience. These elements will result in favourable consumer perception as well as other in-store or shopping behaviours in a broad sense.

Huddleston, Whipple, Mattick and Lee (2009) studied the customer satisfaction in food retailing and found that price, product assortment, service and service influence store satisfaction.

According to Ioannis, Constantine and Magdalini (2010) the level of income negatively causes an impact on both the consumer attitudes and the purchase intention.

Prasad and Aryasri (2011) found that demographic factors have a significant influence on grocery store format choice.

Purchase intentions influence the purchase behaviour in terms of end result, i.e., actual purchase (Luo, Chen, Chin and Liu, 2011).

Kotler (2014) presumed that the consumer purchase intention from a retail store is influenced by several external factors like product, brand, retailer and timing.
2.2. ROLE OF WOMEN IN SHOPPING

Davis and Rigaux (1974) in their research found that wives are dominant during problem recognition and information search stage for “traditional” female products like home furnishing, appliances, cereals etc. whereas husbands were found to be more dominant in the information search stage for male dominated products like automobiles, television sets, razors, etc.

Scherhorn, Reisch and Raab (1990) showed that women usually buy clothes, shoes, jewellery, books and other goods with a highly visually attractive appearance. On the contrary, men prefer buying items, which are more prestigious and expensive often demonstrating their ability to afford the item. Cars, technical appliances and sport equipment serve this purpose well and provide good support for a man’s self-worth.

Williams and Best, (1990) strongly considered women as being warm, expressive, compassionate, and understanding.

Worth, Smith and Mackie (1992) argued that gender identity can be a predictor of consumer behaviour and South and Spitze (1994) proposed shopping as a “female typed” task.

Buttle (1992) stated that the apparel shopping for women is considered to be more attractive since “it is an opportunity for self-expression, fantasy, a break from the normal routine of shopping and perhaps a little self-indulgence”.

Fischer and Arnold (1994) defined the gender role attitudes as the beliefs about ‘appropriate’ roles for men and women. Cultural and social conditions are noted as determining the construct of gender role attitude and it is this construct that is under pressure. Gender role attitude is measured in terms of agreement with the statement: “shopping is primarily a woman’s responsibility”.

Woodruffe (1996) argued that shopping as a leisure activity for women and it could be imposed and biased, because shopping is often seen by women as a legitimate activity, belonging to their gender role, and not necessarily experienced as a leisure activity.

Dholakia (1999) indicated shopping as a gendered activity and a common stereotype about men and shopping is that men enter one store, buy what they need, and then quickly leave. He also stated that men prefer to shop quickly and put as minimum an effort as possible, while women enjoy shopping and are happy to spend a substantial amount of time and energy. Also, men shop shorter and are less involved than women. He also stated that going shopping is a major source of relaxation, associated with females, but the activity is under pressure due to time limitation, changing social roles and technological advances. Even though men are also play a significant role in shopping activities, including shopping for the household, it is usually not a pleasurable activity for them.

Kacen (2000) proposed the concept ‘girl power and boy nature’; Past, present, and paradisal future of consumer gender identity which meant consumption has always been gendered.

Otnes and McGrath (2001) work indicates that men have increased their participation in traditional types of shopping previously thought to be dominated by females, but they are more likely to grab and go and not participate in the social aspects of shopping.

Gaśiorowska (2003) stated that women regard symbolic motives and criteria as more important determinants of shopping than do men.

Mitchell and Walsh (2004) pointed out that males and females want different products and they are likely to have different ways of liking and obtaining these and Johnson and Learned (2004)
underlined the fact that women value unique products and brands that they can use to define their individuality. Females actively seek new styles and fashion trends to a larger extent than men. Women are more sensitive to clothing needs and possess a greater clothing awareness than men.

Chang, Burns and Francis (2004) considered men to perceive shopping satisfaction and hedonic value through physical appearance of the store. In contrary, women sense the satisfaction when their intrinsic needs are sated, like friendly personnel offering a high level of services.

Bakewell and Mitchell (2006) proposed that men hold absolutely opposed values regarding “effective” shopping in comparison to women. They also stated that consumer behaviour differs from males to females.

Alkis Thrassou, Christiana Kone, and Andriana Panayidou (2008) viewed women as more active in shopping than men and as women enjoy shopping and actively plan on browsing as part of their experience, while most men claim to dislike shopping and less than half report making time to shop and browse. There are three motives why people and more specifically women go for shopping: interactions with family, utilitarian and shopping as pleasure.

Kristen Wiig and Chery Smith’s (2009) research focussed on the factors influencing the food choices of low-income women. The main objective of their research was amidst a hunger–obesity paradox, the purpose of the present study was to examine the grocery shopping behaviour and food stamp usage of low income women with children to identify factors influencing their food choices on a limited budget.

Craik (2009) stated that women, generally find shopping more pleasurable than men and have a more positive attitude towards the browsing and social interaction that often follows with the buying procedure. Women associate buying with leisure, shopping plays an emotional, psychological and symbolic role. Furthermore women spend twice as long time in a shop as men and the typical window-shopper is a woman.

Kuruvilla, Nidhi and Nishank (2009) proposed the point that men and women think differently, and these gender-specific brain differences show a significant effect on how the individual absorb, process and retain information.

Another gender study by Gasiorowska (2011) claimed that hedonic shopping is socially accepted for women, not for men, since they tend to participate in other activities satisfying their need for stimulation.

Dr. Gary Mortimer and Dr. Peter Clarke (2011) identified the store characteristics male and female grocery shoppers consider as important and what differences exist between the levels of importance and the shopper’s gender. The results demonstrated that male and female grocery shoppers consider important store characteristics differently and there are specific characteristics that men and women consider more important. Male shoppers considered speed, convenience and efficiency to be the most important factors. Female shoppers, in contrast, reported characteristics relating to pricing, cleanliness and quality.

Dr. Gary Mortimer (2011) conducted a research study on family grocery shopping which was the accepted domain of women; however, modern social and demographic movements challenge traditional gender roles within the family structure. Men were engaged in grocery shopping more freely and frequently, yet the essence of male shopping behaviour and beliefs present an opportunity for examination. From this research it is identified that specific store characteristics, investigates the perceived importance of those characteristics and explores gender, age and income differences that may exist. The results indicated that significant statistical differences between genders based on
perceptions of importance of most store characteristics. Overall, male grocery shoppers considered supermarket store characteristics less important than female shoppers. Income did not affect shoppers’ level of associated importance; however respondents’ age, education and occupation influenced perceptions of price, promotions and cleanliness.

Swarna Bakshi (2012) found that every marketer, today, has realized the fact that gender has become one of the major factors and basis of segmenting a market and targeting the customers. The manuscript revealed that shopping is a more exciting activity for women with respect to men. Female consumers feel more independent when they do shopping in accordance with men and women consider shopping as a social need whereas male consumers pay importance to main function of a product instead of secondary function.

In a study titled, "Men Buy, Women Shop," researchers at Wharton's Jay H. Baker Retail Initiative and the Verde Group, found that women react more strongly than men to personal interaction with sales associates.

Dr. Sriparna Guha (2013) conducted a research study to identify the changing perception and comparison of buying behaviour for working and non-working women in Urban India. It was found that women due to their multiple roles influence their own and of their family members’ buying behaviour. The study also revealed that working women are price, quality and brand conscious and highly influenced by the others in shopping.

3. Conclusion

In this study the researcher has gone through materials that had been investigated on consumer shopping behaviour and the role of women in shopping. The study of consumer behaviour is rapidly evolving as researchers recognize and implement new techniques and trans-disciplinary perspectives to understand the nature of purchase and consumption behaviour. This in-depth outlook attempts to study consumer shopping behaviour in the illumination of rapidly developing lifestyles, standards, priorities, and communal contexts. In particular the purchasing process of women is of more significance to marketing practitioners than their consumption process. When it comes to shopping women are form Nordstrom’s and men are from Sears. “Women tend to be more invested in the shopping experience on many dimensions,” says Robert Price, chief marketing officer at CVS Caremark and a member of the Baker advisory board. Holbrook (1987) suggests that consumer researchers must enlarge their outlook to study all facets of the value potentially provided when some individual acquires, uses, or disposes of any product that might achieve a goal, fulfill a need, or satisfy a want. This broadened viewpoint has been reflected in the literature, as published research focuses on the subjective aspects of the consumption experience, such as hedonic consumption. The overall goal of such research endeavour is to achieve better understanding of consumer shopping behaviour and the role of women in shopping. To conclude, this literature review is drawn so as to better understand the consumer shopping behaviour all the way through studying and identifying their needs leads to huge long term benefits to the businesses. Despite the great efforts to learn and understand the buying behaviour of consumers, it is very difficult to identify the exact reasons why a consumer purchases and prefers one product or service over another one. This is because consumers sometimes formulate purchasing decisions based on their emotional beliefs which they even themselves are not well aware of.

4. FUTURE SCOPE OF RESEARCH

Future investigation might concentrate on the predominant factors and motives that influence and initiate consumers to go on shopping. Also research in personality and shopper typology may result in understanding the attitudes and beliefs of the consumers in shopping.
REFERENCES


